

Guidelines on Inclusive Mentoring

This guide is intended for faculty who advise and mentor graduate students. The goal of this guide is to raise awareness of difficulties specific to students from underrepresented groups (URGs), and suggest ways to address them. This guide is purposefully short; more information can be found in [1-4].

General inclusiveness and wellbeing

Explain unwritten rules and help identify sources of information. New students often feel overwhelmed and excluded because they don't know people, things, and procedures in the department. Help them understand insider jargon, especially acronyms and course number. Identify key people and [resources](#) they should refer to for help.

Be supportive about the emotional challenges of grad school. The emotional roller-coaster of research and frequent rejections take a toll on students mental health [6,7]. Talk to them about these issues and point them to related [resources](#) [8,9]. Encourage students to take time off to deal with difficult situations. Make them feel valued and respected independently of their current progress.

Promote work-life balance and social life. Social isolation leads to loneliness, self-doubt, and may cause depression. Students from URGs can feel particularly isolated or alienated. Encourage students to [attend social events and participate in organizations](#) within the department, as well as maintain friendships and social life outside work. Demonstrate to students that you value each dimension of your life. Share your thoughts about the benefits of balancing work and life. Offer your students tips on managing time.

Accommodate students with family responsibilities. Recognize that students with family responsibilities are not able to spend as many hours on campus as other students, but often can be better focused when they are there. Acknowledge the amount of organization, commitment, and passion needed to “do it all and do it well.” Help students to communicate how a graduate degree can bring long-term benefits to them and their families.

Women

Boost participation in meetings. Women might have trouble expressing themselves in meetings. Encourage your female student to state her views and show her expertise; make sure she does not get interrupted in meetings.

Help her say “No”. Women have a hard time saying no [5]. Coach your female student to say “no” to tasks that do not fit her priorities in a polite yet unapologetic way.

Discuss the Imposter Syndrome. The Imposter Syndrome affects most academics, but women are more susceptible to it than men [10]. Tell your students about the syndrome and how common it is, talk about your personal experience.

Foster collaborative group culture. An overly competitive and critical atmosphere in graduate programs can alienate minority students and women. Within your research group, create opportunities for collaboration and encourage praising other members’ work.

Give positive feedback. Women tend to attribute negative experiences they have in graduate school to personal deficiencies, and interpret a professor’s distance as an indication that he or she has a negative opinion of them. Raise their awareness of this issue and give positive feedback when it’s due.

Ethnic and Racial Minorities

Help find role models. Ethnic minorities and people of color benefit from having role models. Help your student connect to a faculty member who belongs to the same URG.

International Students

Help acclimate to US university culture. Some international students might not be used to expressing their opinion to the professor or participating in animated discussions. Clearly state your expectations (regarding results, timelines, style of work). Ask questions to make sure you have a shared understanding. Encourage international students to participate in discussions, but assure them that you are stimulating dialogue and not singling them out. Introduce new international graduate students to more advanced international students and U.S. graduate students with international experience.

Help overcome language issues and disadvantages. Some international students have difficulties with English (but even those who speak English natively might not be accustomed to the US culture). Allocate more time for paper writing, so that you can help student improve their writing. Set up the group culture where more senior students give junior students feedback on writing and talks before the advisor does. Ask the student to read, analyse, review many papers in your research area. Recommend campus language [resources](#).

Work-Related Resources

- Computing support: csehelp@cs.ucsd.edu

- Printer setup:
<https://cse.ucsd.edu/administration/computing-support/graduate-students/printing>

Mental Health and Wellbeing Resources

- UCSD Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS, <https://caps.ucsd.edu>) has a number of services available, including free & confidential counseling
- CAPS also has flyers (at caps.ucsd.edu) on dealing with stress!
- Many sources of support:
- Black Resource Center (<https://brc.ucsd.edu>)
- Cross Cultural Center (<https://ccc.ucsd.edu>)
- LGBT Resource Center (<https://lgbt.ucsd.edu>)
- Raza Resource Centro (<https://raza.ucsd.edu>)
- Women's Center (<https://women.ucsd.edu>)
- Undergraduate Women in Computing (WIC, <https://wic.ucsd.edu>)

CSE Organizations and Social Events

- GradWIC: <http://gradwic.ucsd.edu/>
- Department hikes (join outdoors@cs.ucsd.edu)
- Holiday party (December)
- Social hour (Fridays, 3:30-4:30, 3rd floor lobby)
- Coffee hour (Mondays, 2:30-3:30, 3rd floor lobby)

Resources for International Students

- Global Education: <http://global.ucsd.edu/>
- English Language Program for International Instructors:
<https://commons.ucsd.edu/about/directors-staff/stacklin-martha.html>

References

- [1] UW Mentoring Guides for Faculty
<https://grad.uw.edu/for-students-and-post-docs/core-programs/mentoring/mentoring-guides-for-faculty/>
- [2] UIUC Mentoring Toolkit <https://grad.illinois.edu/faculty-staff/toolkits/mentor>
- [3] UMich: How to Mentor Graduate Students
<http://www.rackham.umich.edu/downloads/publications/Fmentoring.pdf>
- [4] NCWIT Mentoring Activities Guide
https://www.ncwit.org/sites/default/files/legacy/pdf/IMentor_ActivitiesGuide.pdf
- [5] <http://www.businessinsider.com/why-hard-for-women-to-say-no-at-work-2014-12>

[6]

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2018/03/06/new-study-says-graduate-students-mental-health-crisis>

[7]

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/01/perfectionism-has-become-a-hidden-epidemic-among-young-people>

[8]

<https://dynamicceology.wordpress.com/2013/11/18/are-you-resistant-or-resilient-in-the-face-of-rejection/>

[9] <https://twitter.com/keenanisalive/status/886595242413174785>

[10]

<https://chroniclevitae.com/news/412-faking-it-women-academia-and-impostor-syndrome>